



JESUS

and his

OPPONENTS

1. The Pharisees were the main opponents of Jesus throughout his ministry. These men were well educated Jewish teachers of the law, who were very popular among the ordinary people.
2. They were also very narrow minded and strict. They believed that everyone ought to keep the Law of Moses and their traditions. They taught in the synagogues and were often to be seen about the streets.
3. Jesus was criticized by the Pharisees because he failed to follow the law in the sort of detail they thought it merited.
 - eg Jesus healed on the Sabbath Mark 3:6, Luke 14:1-6.
 - He didn't avoid people such as lepers Matt 8:1-4.
 - Jesus failed to stop his disciples breaking other Sabbath rules Mark 2:23-27.
 - The disciples failed to observe customs about washing hands Mark 7:1-8.
4. On the other hand there were occasions when Jesus openly criticized the Pharisees. They allowed people to practice "Corban" which meant that they didn't have to look after their aged parents. Mark 7:9-13 and Jesus did not want to observe all their dietary laws Mark 7:14-23.
5. The Scribes were a professional group of people who associated with the Pharisees. They also interpreted the Law of Moses and wrote it down. They led plans to kill Jesus Luke 19:47.
6. The Sadducees though, who were only found in Jerusalem were to worst opponents of Jesus and they were the people who were responsible for his death.
7. Sadducees were a very unpopular aristocratic movement. These wealthy priests ran the Temple at Jerusalem and worked hand in glove with the Romans. Most Jews at the time of Jesus disliked the Sadducees.
8. Jesus upset the Sadducees when he caused a disturbance in the Temple. Matt 21:12-15.
9. Jesus was arrested by the Temple authorities and he was taken to the Chief Priest's house for trial. Mark 14:43-65.